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DEPT. FOR EUR/WE (JLARREA), G/TIP (AMBASSADOR MILLER, DONNELLY)

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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR MILLER'S VATICAN MEETINGS

REF: A) VATICAN 501, B) VATICAN 510, C) ROME 3847

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¶1. (U) Summary. During his October visit to Rome, Ambassador John Miller met with Holy See officials in two Pontifical Councils to promote Vatican engagement on trafficking in persons. Ambassador Miller also attended a half-day conference co-sponsored by Embassy Rome and Embassy Vatican, and met with Sister Eugenia Bonetti's Hope Family House, and John Allen, Vatican correspondent for the National Catholic Reporter. Both Holy See officials and NGOs emphasized the importance of faith-based organizations and suggested new avenues for cooperation in combating the global traffic in persons.

Holy See suggests approaching bishops' conferences

¶2. (U) Monsignor Frank Dewane of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace encouraged Ambassador Miller to work through the global network of bishops' councils to promote anti-TIP programs. Dewane suggested that Miller lobby the U.S. representative to the European bishops' conference to bring the issue onto the EU agenda. Ambassador Miller focused on how the Church could address the demand side of trafficking in EU countries through a pastoral approach. Dewane noted that the Holy See sets standards, but local action depends on country initiatives by bishops or diocesan priests, religious men and women, and lay workers. Dewane mentioned the Conference of Major Superiors of Men and the Leadership Conference of Women Religious as possible avenues.

¶3. (U) Archbishop Agostino Marchetto, secretary of the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerants, explained that in contrast to Justice and Peace, Migrants and Itinerants has a pastoral as opposed to political focus. Marchetto noted that in his dicastery's vast scope of responsibilities relating to "people on the move," trafficking is only one aspect, the illegal side of travel and immigration. Marchetto then asked Miller directly why the U.S. continually presses trafficking in persons with his dicastery instead of general immigration issues. Ambassador Miller noted that TIP is one of the most important of all migration issues. Marchetto argued that it was the role of governments and states to propose concrete actions against TIP. When pressed by Ambassador Miller, Marchetto admitted that Migrants and Itinerants had no plans for further conferences or statements against trafficking in persons, though it did make a big stride on the issue with its recent conference.

Joining the Fight Against Modern-Day Slavery

¶4. (U) Embassy Vatican and Embassy Rome co-hosted a conference

October 26 at the Centro Studi Americani titled Joining the Fight Against Modern-Day Slavery: A Seminar on Trafficking in Persons. The conference brought Ambassador Miller together with representatives of faith-based organizations, the Italian government and non-governmental organizations to analyze some of the root causes of trafficking in persons. Speakers included Counselor Bruno Brattoli, Director of the Department of Equal Opportunity and President of the Italian Government Committee on Trafficking in Persons; Sebastien Dechamps, Middle East Desk Officer for Caritas Internationalis; Senator Enrico Pianetta, President of the Human Rights Committee of the Italian Senate; and Isabella Orfano, of On The Road and a member of the EU Commission Advisory Group on Trafficking.

15. (U) Sebastien Dechamps, Middle East and North Africa Desk Officer for Caritas Internationalis, spoke on the role of faith-based organizations in combating trafficking in persons. Dechamps pointed to the presence of faith-based organizations in almost every country where trafficking takes place, and emphasized that faith-based organizations are usually close to victims and other "social groups" which are part of the issue. He spoke about "Christian Organizations Against Trafficking in Women Network" or COATNET, led by Caritas Europa. At present there are over 30 member organizations, the majority European but increasingly global. COATNET focuses on prevention and awareness raising, assistance to victims and political advocacy work. In September, delegates from all seven regions of the Caritas network, held a TIP meeting and acknowledged the need to be more in touch with the congregations in their countries, to engage together on prevention, care, and reintegration.

Hope Family House

16. (U) The Hope Family House religious community, which has functioned as a shelter for survivors of trafficking since 1998, hosted Ambassador Miller for a working dinner. The shelter is subsidized in part by the City Council of Rome, while much of

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its administration is provided by 2004 G/TIP Hero Sister Eugenia Bonetti. Bonetti explained to Ambassador Miller the difficulties the sisters have encountered under Article 18 of Italian Anti-TIP law. These difficulties include getting full assistance for victims who will not denounce their traffickers, keeping under-18 victims from the detention facility at Ponte Galleria and the forced repatriation of victims. Bonetti also presented Miller with a booklet prepared by the Italian Union of Major Superiors, the Union of Italian Superiors General and the International Organization for Migration that is currently being used in TIP training courses for religious sisters around the globe. (Ref B)

17. (U) The visit to Hope Family House also offered Ambassador Miller an opportunity to talk directly with six victims of trafficking (3 Nigerian, 3 Romanian) about their personal experiences and their interaction with the religious community. Ambassador Miller spent several hours with the nuns and victims over a family-style dinner and in quiet conversation, which encouraged information sharing and an increased understanding of the issue for all involved.

National Catholic Reporter

18. (U) Vatican-watcher John Allen acknowledged the good work done by the USG, and offered some observations about how Post and G/TIP might continue to engage the Holy See on this pressing issue. John Allen is the Vatican correspondent for the National Catholic Reporter, and has reported extensively on Embassy Vatican programs and Holy statements addressing trafficking in persons.

19. (U) Allen noted the untapped potential of Catholic

organizations worldwide and encouraged further collaboration with Caritas Internationalis, Jesuit Relief Services, and individuals such as Cardinal Juan Sandoval Iniguez who heads the Archdiocese of Guadalajara and is influential within Vatican circles.

COMMENT

¶10. (U) Ambassador Miller's visit highlighted the role of faith-based organizations in combating trafficking in persons. Although Dewane was very positive about opportunities for working with the bishops' conferences, Marchetto's negative stance was strangely discordant with Migrants and Itinerants' productive June TIP conference (Ref A) that resulted in a list of promising concrete recommendations on the issue. The range of Catholic entities engaged in anti-TIP efforts was highlighted in our programming with Caritas and Hope Family House. In addition, interlocutors offered new avenues of approach, promoting future work with bishops' councils, organizations of men and women religious and Catholic relief agencies. Post thanks Ambassador Miller and the G/TIP office for their support, and looks forward to future programming on the issue. END
COMMENT.
SANDROLINI